

GRECO-BUDDHISM

2.1.5. The convergence of Greco-Roman culture and Buddhist beliefs affected the development of unique sculptural



Greco-Buddhism is the name given to the **SYNCRETISM** (the combining of different (often contradictory) beliefs, often while melding practices of various schools of thought) of Hellenistic and Buddhist cultures sometime between the 4th & 5th Centuries BCE. This was most commonly seen around the Indian Subcontinent (from Afghanistan through India). It's influences eventually spread as far east as Japan (Japan developed a Hercules-god that defended the Buddha known as Nio).

It began with Alexander the Great's incursion into the India Subcontinent. It was carried on after Alexander by the Indo-Greek rulers during the Hellenistic Era. It had profound influence on the development of Buddhism (particularly Mahayana Buddhism).

EXAMPLES

GRECO-ROMAN



The latest of the three orders of Greco- Roman architecture, Corinthian columns derive their name from Corinth



Atlas was a Greek Titan who held up the celestial spheres (although today he is often depicted holding up the earth).



Toga was the distinctive Roman garment worn over a tunic. It was made of wool and only worn by Roman (male) citizens

GRECO-BIDDHISM



BUDDHIST



Typical Buddhist relief on a wall in India. Notice how he is prominently featured in the new Greco-Buddhist column.



Typical base of a statue of Buddha from India. Buddha is often seen sitting beneath the Bodhi tree.



There are no statue representations of Buddha pre-1st Century CE. Other statues show humans in loin cloths.